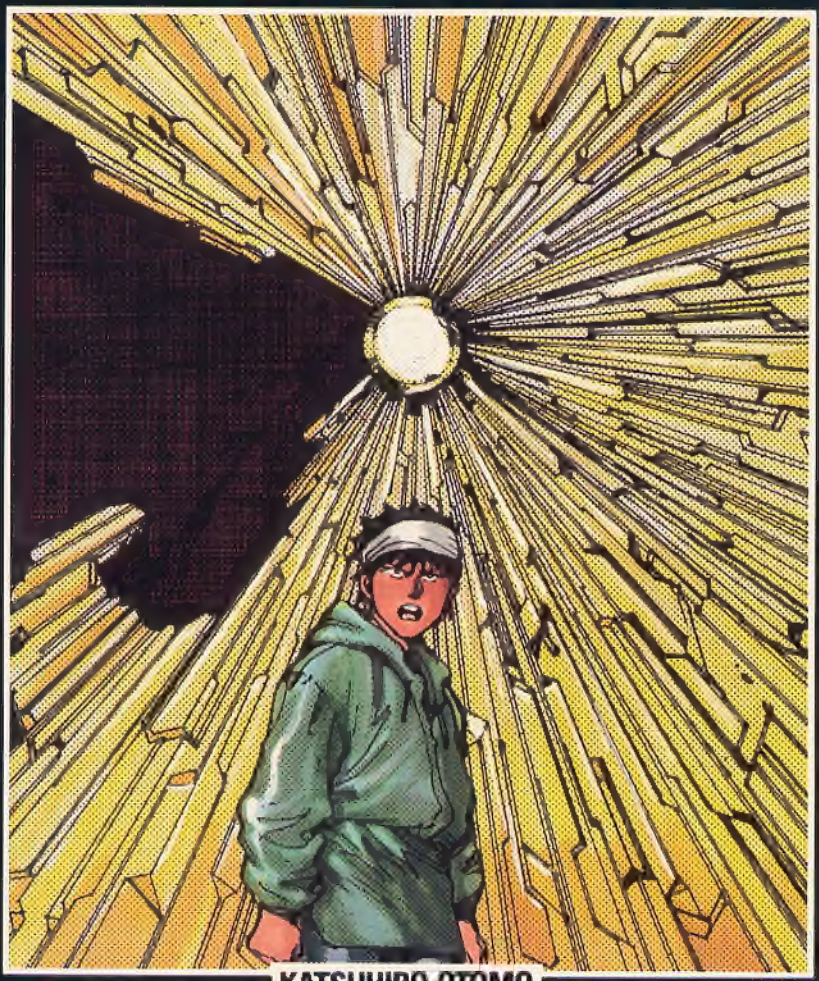
AKIRA

18



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KATSUHIRO OTOMO

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AKIRA

AKIRA

BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO

Chapter 18

AMID THE RUINS

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

Twenty-thirty. The world stands poised at the edge of World War IV. An explosion of thermo-nuclear proportions has been set off in **Neo-Tokyo**. The world, particularly the superpowers, wonder what has happened. In **Neo-Tokyo** in a section known as the "old city", a band of teenaged delinquents led by **Kaneda** encountered **Number 26**, a child named **Takashi** who used extraordinary telekinetic abilities to injure **Tetsuo**, one of Kaneda's close friends.

As a result **Kaneda** and **Tetsuo** become entangled in a power struggle between a mysterious military and scientific organization led by a man known only as the **Colonel** and an underground resistance group bent on putting a stop to the Colonel's activities.

Among the resistance, **Kaneda** meets **Kay**—a girl he alternately maddens and tries to seduce—and Kay's "brother", **Ryu**. Other important resistance members include Ryu's superior, the opposition party leader **Nezu**, and a powerful religious leader with strong precognitive gifts, **Lady Miyako**.

The **Colonel** has a number of children like **Number 26** under his control. Each child possesses a distinct set of psychic talents and is identified by a number marked on the hand. At one time, **Lady Miyako** was **Number 19** in this series. **Number 28** is **Akira**, so powerful that since the war he has been suspended in cryogenic sleep.

The Colonel's staff conducts experiments which awaken tremendous telepathic potential in **Tetsuo**, who is redubbed **Number 41**. Able to shrug off the most serious injuries, **Tetsuo** goes on a killing spree, murdering one of Kaneda's friends and even attacking **Kaneda**. Then, followed by **Kay** and **Kaneda**, **Tetsuo** sets out in search of **Akira**, whose powers he fears may rival his own.

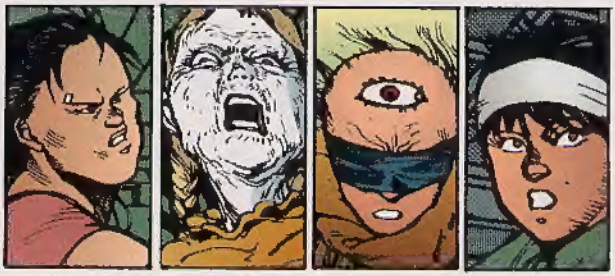
Tetsuo repels soldiers armed with the most sophisticated weaponry. The scientists monitoring Akira's cryogenic sleep realize that even in hibernation, Akira's power is responding to Tetsuo's psychic energy. When **Tetsuo** reaches Akira's resting place, the cryogenic chamber cracks from within and **Akira**—dazed and docile following his long sleep—emerges.

Akira **The Colonel** **Tetsuo** **Masaru**

Terrified of what may occur, the **Colonel** summons the powerful SOL military satellite and orders that its laser cannon be fired at **Tetsuo** and **Akira**. The two are separated by the blasts. **Akira** is saved by **Kay** and **Kaneda**, but **Tetsuo** is less fortunate. The laser strikes his left arm.

Neo-Tokyo is placed in a state of military emergency following the disaster. "Caretaker robots" patrol the streets, dealing harshly with looters and restoring order. Discredited and made a scapegoat following the disaster, the **Colonel**—who successfully conceals the truth about what has occurred despite leaks to the media—decides to use the emergency as an excuse to hunt down and destroy his enemies. With the aid of his inner circle, the **Colonel** stages a successful coup d'etat.

Nezu, planning to exploit **Akira** for his own purposes, kidnaps the child and orders his staff to kill **Kaneda**, **Kay**, and **Chiyoko**, who nevertheless manage to escape and free **Akira**. He is, however, stolen from them again, this time by **Sakaki**, **Miki**, and **Mozu**—young psychics trained by **Lady Miyako**, who now knows that **Nezu** has betrayed her. The **Colonel**, with his troops and his psychic children, is also frantically trying to find **Akira** before he fully awakens. On the Colonel's orders, **Takashi** kills **Mozu** during a psychic showdown. **Nezu** corners **Sakaki** and **Akira**, but before he can do them any harm, **Miki** sacrifices her life, enabling the pair to escape. **Sakaki** hides **Akira** in a dumpster. There he is found by **Ryu**—one of the few people who doesn't recognize the child. **Ryu** and **Akira** encounter **Nezu**, who blurts out the boy's name.



Chiyoko **Kiyoko** **Seer** **Kay**

Ryu realizes that his former master is a traitor. When **Nezu** tries to kill them, **Ryu** guns him down and leaves him for dead.

As **Sakaki** and **Ryu** fight for control of **Akira**, they are suddenly joined by **Kaneda, Kay** and **Chiyoko**. Then all six of them are surrounded by the Colonel's troops. **Sakaki** makes a last ditch effort to escape and is killed, her spirit embraced by **Lady Miyako** as she dies. **Takashi** fondly greets **Akira** and reintroduces him to their fellow psychics **Kiyoko** and **Masaru**. Then **Nezu**, dying and determined on revenge, arrives and tries to kill **Akira**, killing **Takashi** instead.

The trauma of Takashi's death galvanizes **Akira**, who fully awakens and unleashes a light blast powerful enough to devastate the entire city. Acting quickly, **Masaru** and **Kiyoko** sweep most of the people in the area upward, into the shelter of a skyscraper. The entire resistance group is separated, and **Kaneda** is last seen vanishing towards the sky. In the wake of the disaster, **Lady Miyako** opens her temple and offers shelter and comfort to those in need.

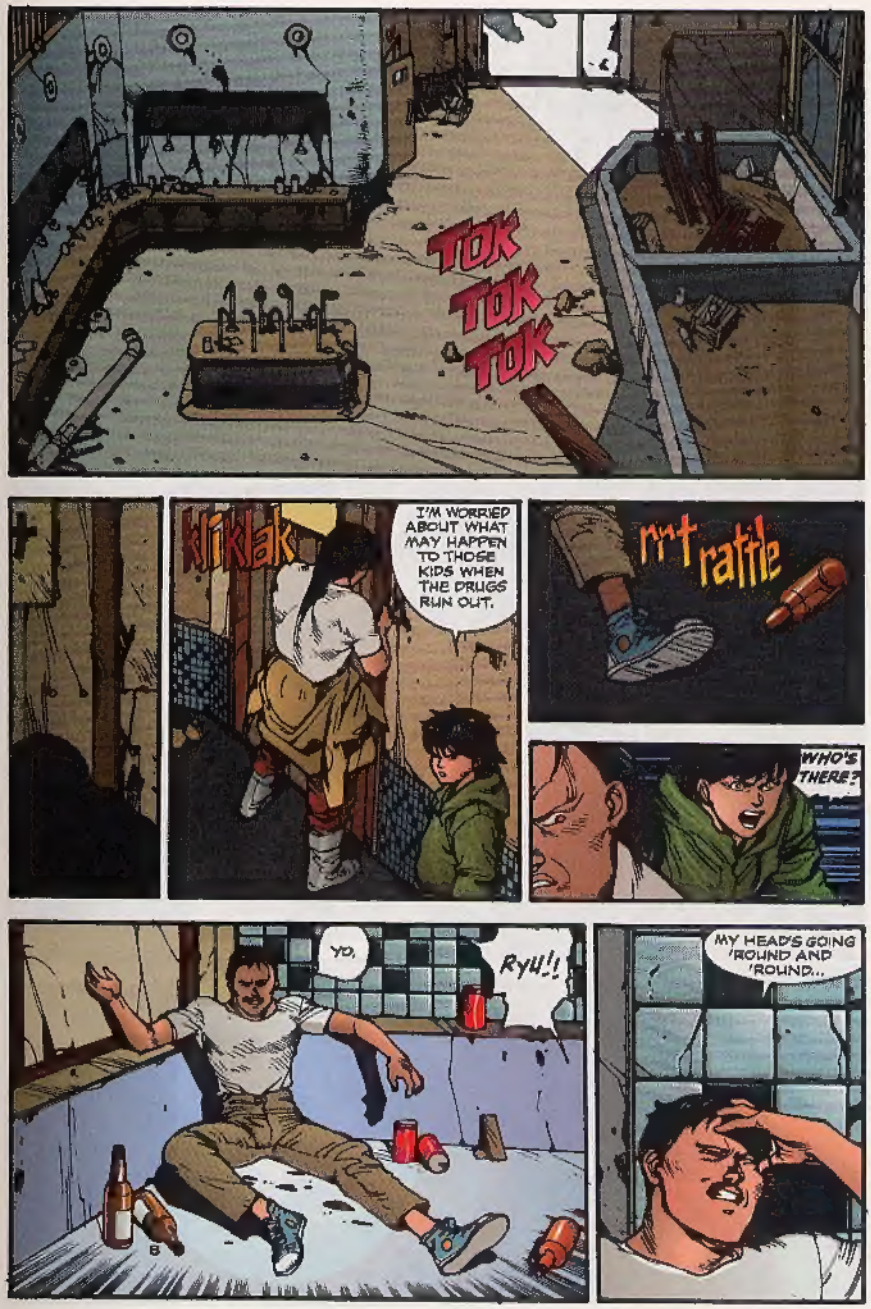
Afterwards, as **Akira** sits alone, telekinetically playing with bits of rubble, **Tetsuo** finally reappears. **Neo-Tokyo** is completely cut off from the outside world, and in the western part of the city the **Great Tokyo Empire** is formed—a monarchy with **Akira** on the throne and **Tetsuo** as his prime minister. Together the pair use their powers, healing the sick, wielding control of the faithful, and organizing their subjects into fighting units that destroy caretaker robots and conquer military and medical relief parties sent from the outside world. In addition, **Tetsuo** conducts deadly tests on special followers, hoping to find more psychics fit for training. **The Empire** is eventually infiltrated by teams of spies sent from the outside to learn the truth about what is happening in the city.

Masaru and **Kiyoko** are sick with withdrawal from the drug which augments and helps to channel the powers of all psychics. **Kay** is trying to treat them with drugs she's been able to steal and get on the Black Market. Following an injection, **Kiyoko**, whose gift is precognition, tells **Kay** that she must seek out **Number 19**.

Lady Miyako **Lt. Yamada** **Tetsuo's Aide** **Ryu**

TAK
SPLISH
THE KIDS ARE FINALLY ASLEEP.
HOW LONG DO YOU THINK THE DRUGS'LL HELP THEM?
SPLASH
I WISH I KNEW, CHIYOKO... MAYBE TWO DAYS.
FLUMP

DID YOU FIND OUT ANYTHING MORE ABOUT THIS "NUMBER 19"?
ALL SHE SAID WAS THAT I SHOULD ASK NUMBER 19 FOR HELP.
KAY, THE WHOLE CITY IS IN RUINS. HOW ARE WE EVEN GOING TO FIND THIS NUMBER 19.
WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT IT IS... A THING, A PERSON, DEAD, ALIVE...
I KNOW WHERE TO GO...
WAIT A MINUTE! DO YOU KNOW WHERE THAT IS? IT'S LADY MIYAKO'S TERRITORY.
I KNOW. BUT SHE SAID IF I GET THERE I'LL FIND NUMBER 19.
LET'S HURRY.

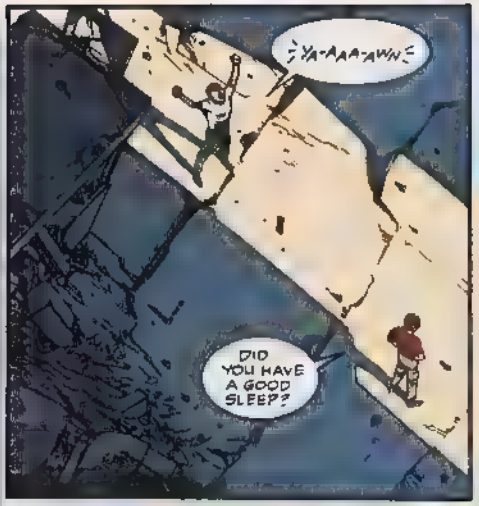

TOK
TOK
TOK
klik klak
I'M WORRIED ABOUT WHAT MAY HAPPEN TO THOSE KIDS WHEN THE DRUGS RUN OUT.
rrrt rattle
WHO'S THERE?
YO,
Ryu!!
MY HEAD'S GOING 'ROUND AND 'ROUND...

YOU'RE DRUNK, AREN'T YOU?
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN FOR THE PAST THREE DAYS? DID YOU FIND OUR FRIENDS?
WHADDAYA MEAN "OUR" FRIENDS?
ISN'T THAT WHERE YOU WERE? LOOKING FOR THEM?
Shape
LET ME SEE
I CAN HANDLE THIS ONE
HUNH KAY?
AND YOU'D BETTER TAKE SOMETHING A LITTLE LIGHTER

?
KAY. DO YOU TH NK YOU CAN HANDLE ...?
RR...

EH?
OHH!
SSH
KAY!
RYU!
WHY DON'T YOU STICK YOUR HEAD IN A BUCKET AND COOL OFF?!
.....
.....
BUT... CHIYOKO!
LIKE YOU SAID, WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO SCREW AROUND.
tok tok tok
MY BUDDY.. MY PAL.

I-I... LOVE HIM!
I-I HAVE FOR A LONG TIME
IF THERE'S ANYTHING HE NEEDS, ANYTHING I CAN DO TO HELP HIM.
WHAT?!
SMAK
DON'T BE A FOOL! YOU'RE WASTING YOUR PITY ON HIM!
ALL MY FRIENDS, ALL OF THEM.
HE'S JUST A DRUNKEN BUM!
THEY'RE ALL DEAD.


YA-AAA-AWN
DID YOU HAVE A GOOD SLEEP?

WHAT DO WE DO TODAY?
TODAY WE'RE OFF TO SEE--

--THE GREAT AKIRA
YESSIR!

HUNH?
A GUNSHOT
SOLDOUT
AKIRA

HUFF
PUFF
PUFF
TAK TAK TAK
AA!EE!
THOP
LAUGH
SSHK
AH!

...DNNN

LOUSY SPY

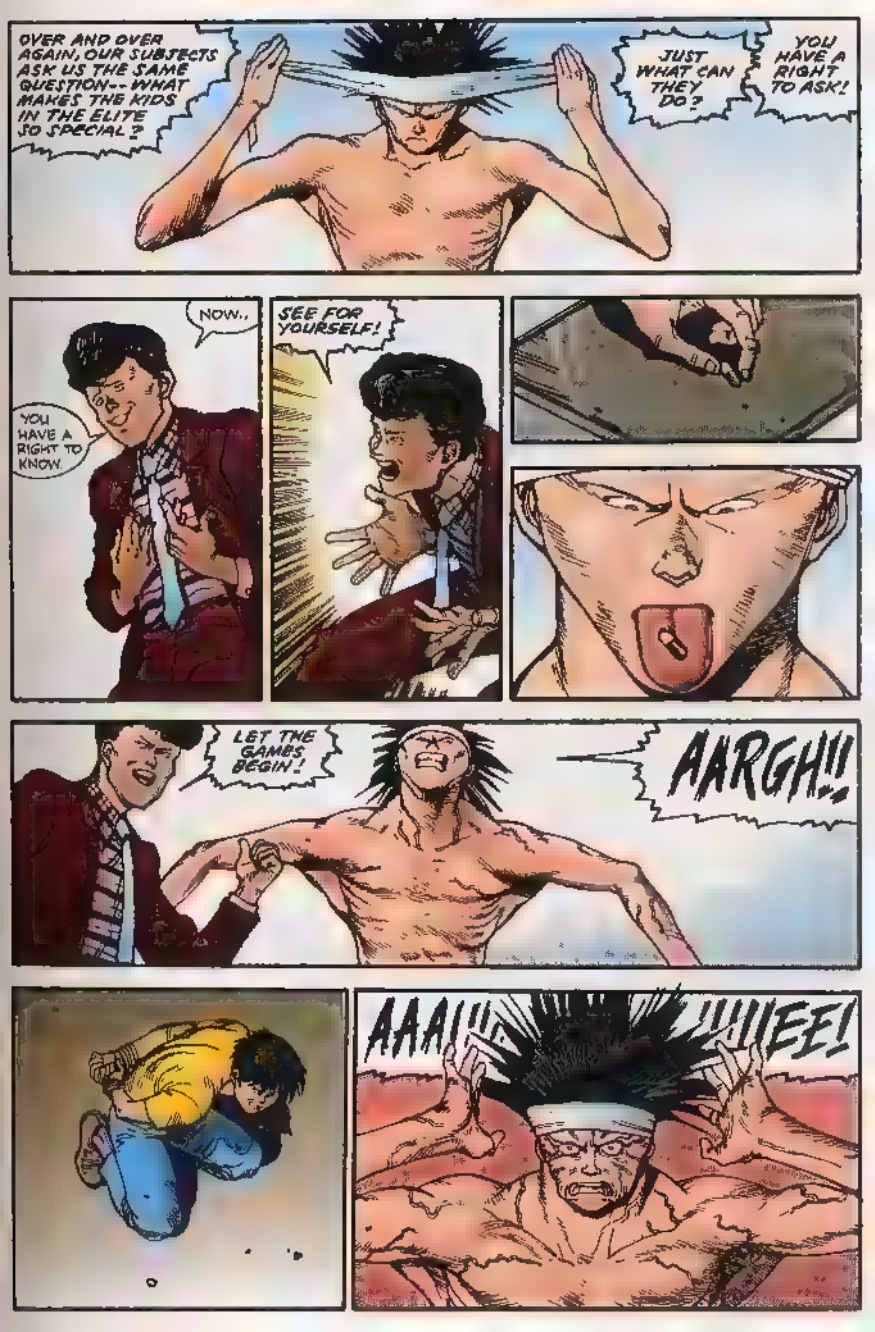
BANG
AHEM

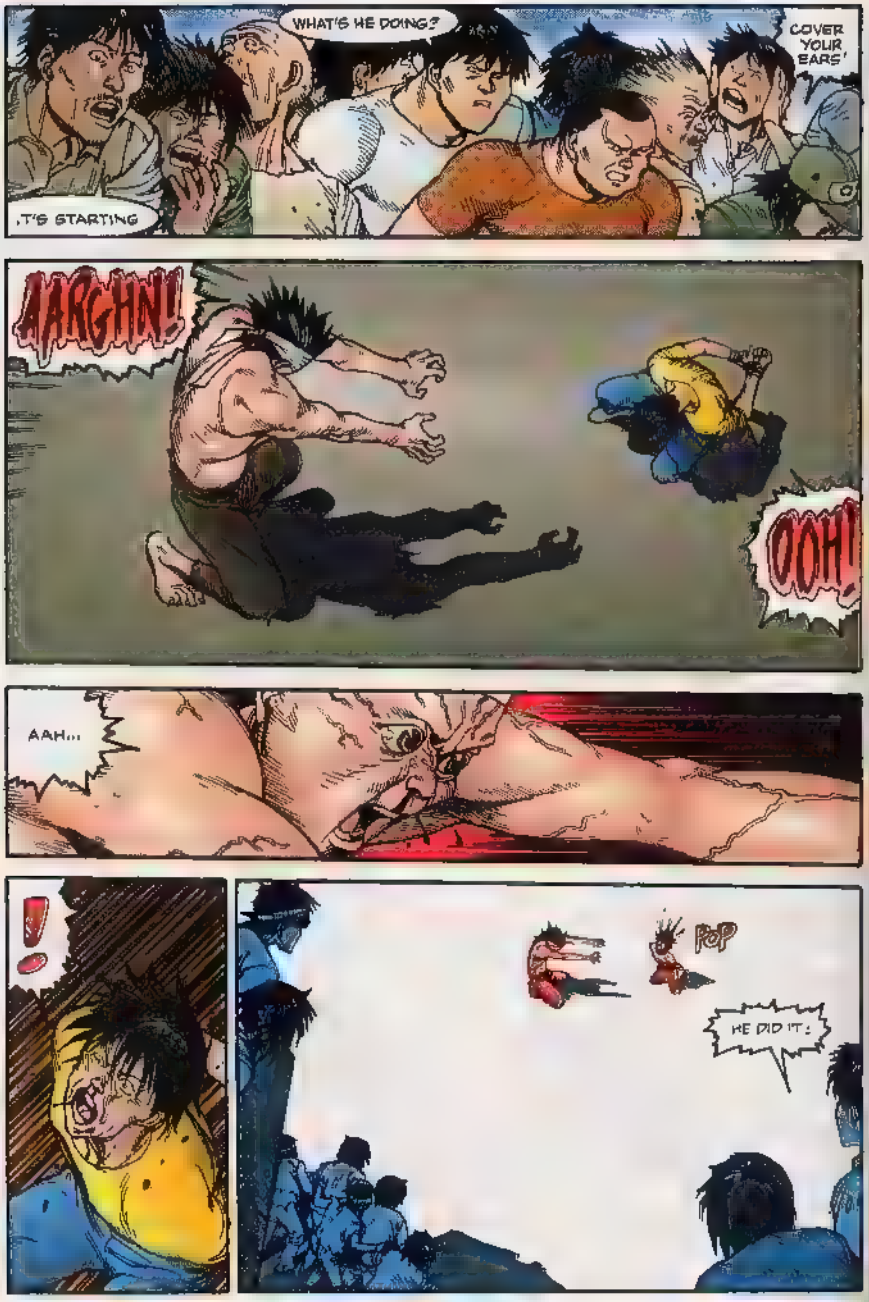
WHAT'S UP?
T'S A SPY!

A SPY?!
HE'S ABOUT TO GET CAUGHT BY THE GREAT TOKYO EMPIRE

WELL? DID YOU TAKE HIM ALIVE?
... ..
GOOD! GET SET FOR A PUBLIC EXECUTION
COME ON! HURRY!
DON'T WANNA MISS THIS!
...SHIT...
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN!

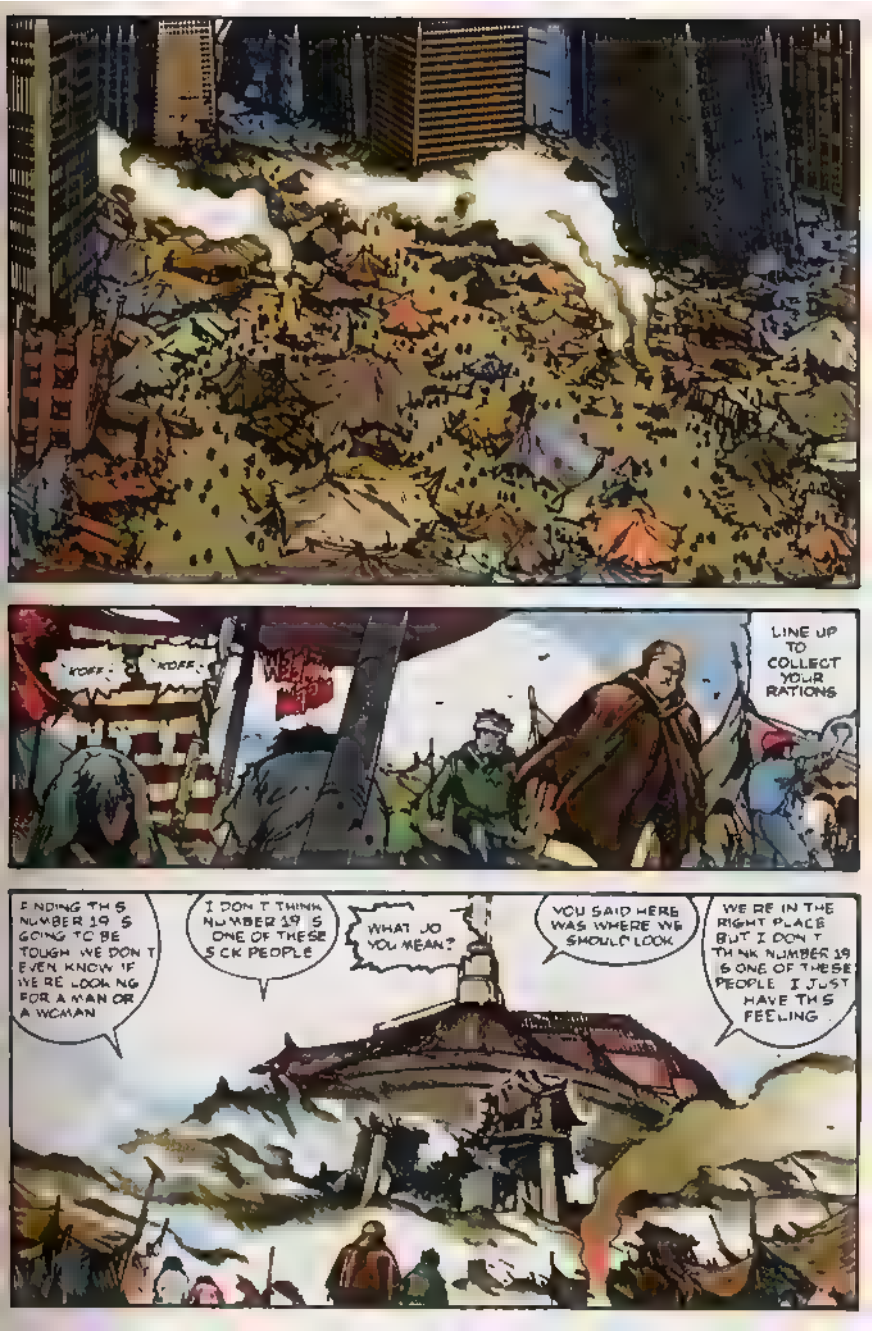
THE MAN IS A FOREIGN SPY!
OURS IS A YOUNG NATION, AND SOME MIGHT SAY IT IS VULNERABLE!
IT'S TRUE, WE ARE STILL FORMING OUR LAWS AND WE DON'T YET HAVE A WRITTEN CHARTER OR CONSTITUTION.
BUT, AS THE TWIG IS BENT, SO THE TREE IS INCLINED! WE MUST BEGIN AS WE MEAN TO GO ON!
INTERFERENCE FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!
IT DOESN'T MATTER IF THE INTERFERENCE COMES FROM THE UNITED STATES OR THE SOVIET UNION...
...OR EVEN FROM JAPAN HERSELF!
GRR
GET HOLD OF YOURSELF.
QUIT SHOVING!
THIS LAND IS OUR LAND!

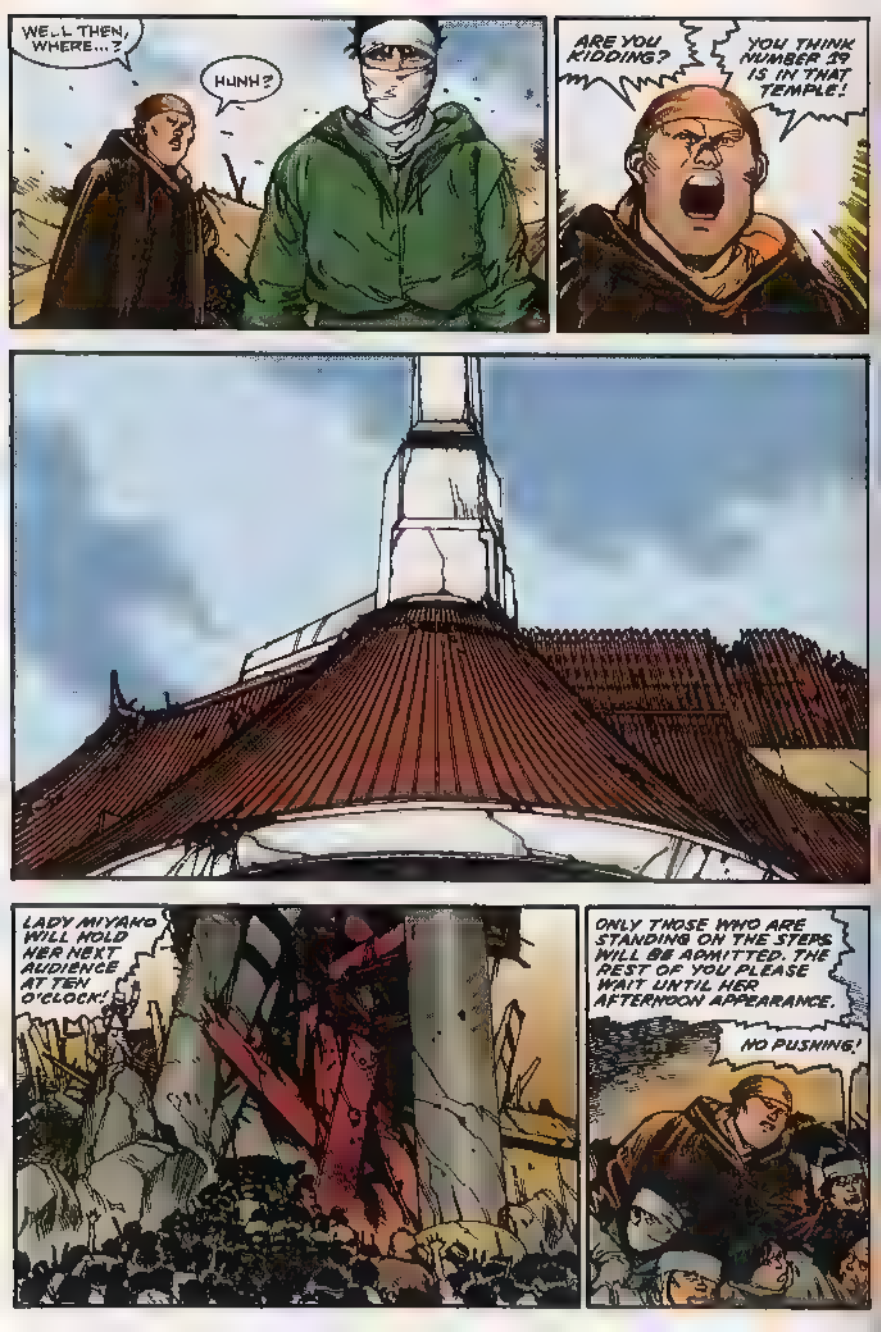

OVER AND OVER AGAIN, OUR SUBJECTS ASK US THE SAME QUESTION-- WHAT MAKES THE KIDS IN THE ELITE SO SPECIAL?
JUST WHAT CAN THEY DO?
YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO ASK!
NOW..
YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO KNOW.
SEE FOR YOURSELF!
LET THE GAMES BEGIN!
AARGH!!
AAA!!
!!!EE!


WHAT'S HE DOING?
COVER YOUR EARS!
IT'S STARTING
AARGHN!
OOH!
AAH...
!
POP
HE DID IT!

WOW!
WHAT HAPPENED? I DIDN'T SEE IT..
DID HE KILL HIM?
PUFF!
WHEEZE WHEEZE
PUFF!
I GET IT! THAT POWER IS THEIR BIG SECRET WEAPON!
WHEEZE
ALL THANKS TO THE GREAT AKIRA FOR HIS DIVINE PROTECTION!
HAIL TO THE GREAT TOKYO EMPIRE!
HAIL!
HAIL!
HOORAY!
BANZAI!

!
"HAIL TO THE GREAT TOKYO EMPIRE" GUESS THEY'VE BEEN HERE, TOO
LET'S GO


KOFF
KOFF
LINE UP TO COLLECT YOUR RATIONS
FINDING THIS NUMBER 19 IS GOING TO BE TOUGH WE DON'T EVEN KNOW IF WE'RE LOOKING FOR A MAN OR A WOMAN
I DON'T THINK NUMBER 19 IS ONE OF THESE SICK PEOPLE
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
YOU SAID HERE WAS WHERE WE SHOULD LOOK
WE'RE IN THE RIGHT PLACE BUT I DON'T THINK NUMBER 19 IS ONE OF THESE PEOPLE I JUST HAVE THIS FEELING

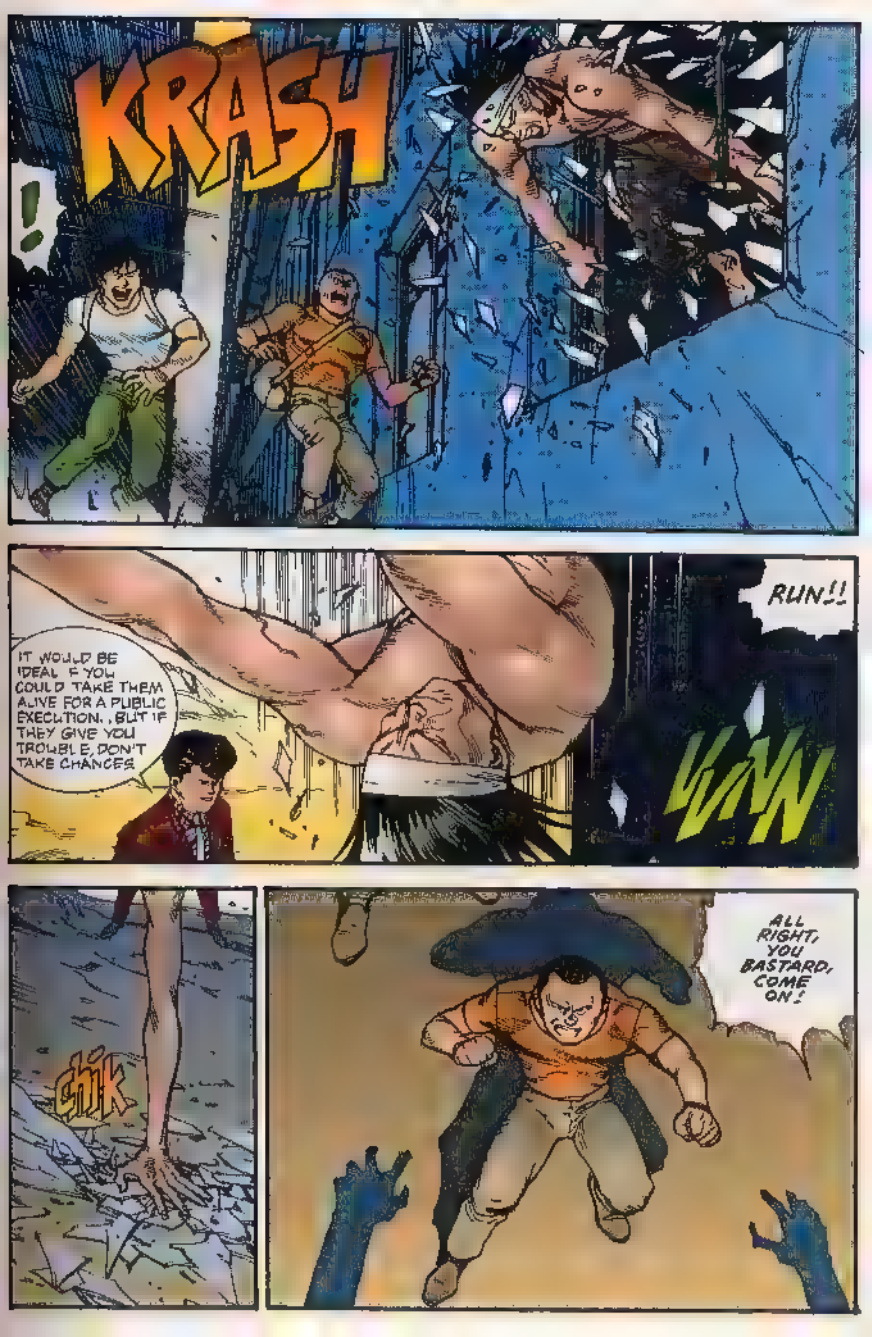

WELL THEN, WHERE...?
HUNH?
ARE YOU KIDDING?
YOU THINK NUMBER 19 IS IN THAT TEMPLE!
LADY MIYAKO WILL HOLD HER NEXT AUDIENCE AT TEN O'CLOCK!
ONLY THOSE WHO ARE STANDING ON THE STEPS WILL BE ADMITTED. THE REST OF YOU PLEASE WAIT UNTIL HER AFTERNOON APPEARANCE.
NO PUSHING!

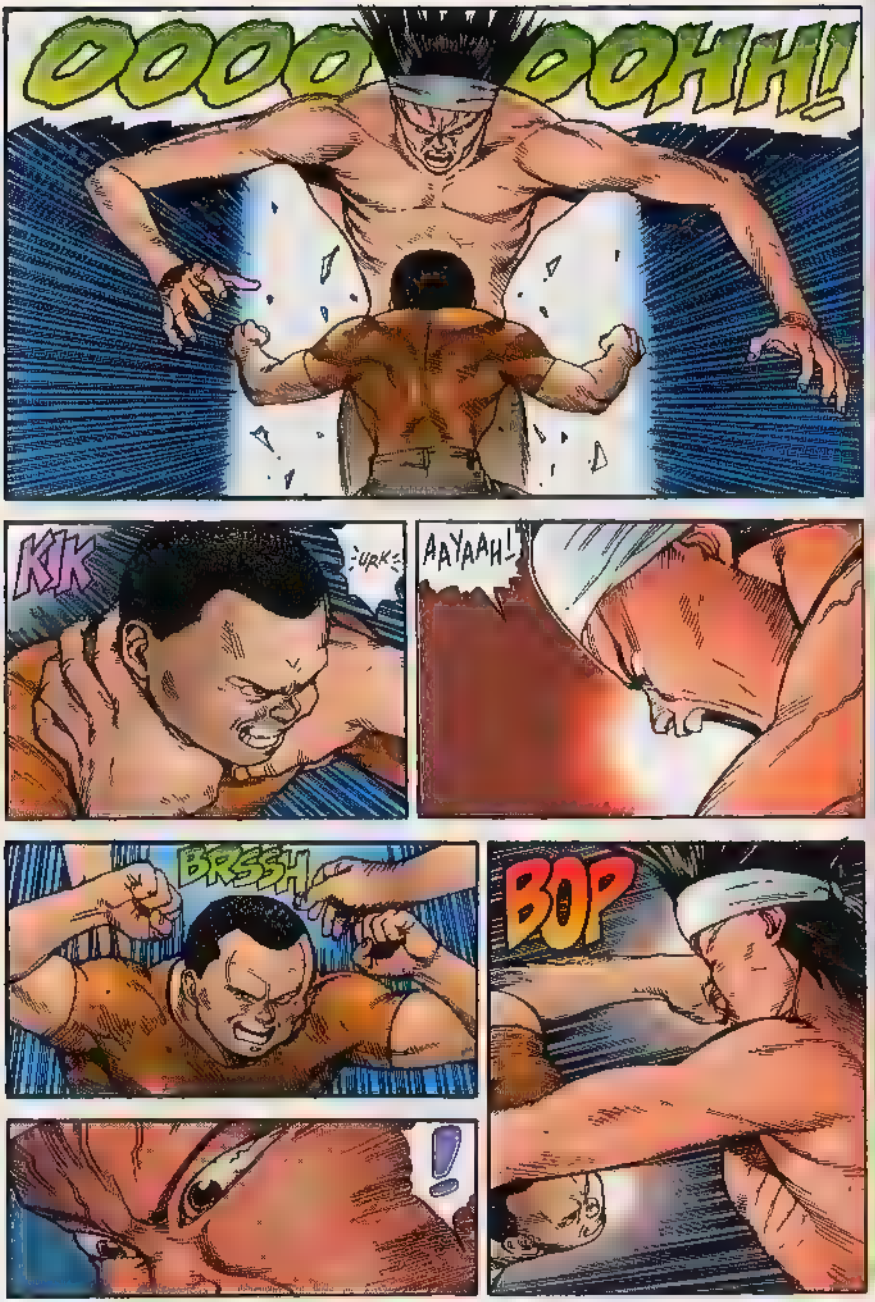
PLEASE STOP SHOVING!
YOU WILL ALL GET YOUR TURN!
ALL OF THE SICK LINE UP HERE!
AFTER THE SERVICE, WE WILL DISTRIBUTE WHAT RATIONS WE CAN, BUT SUPPLIES ARE LIMITED, SO PLEASE...
LOOKS LIKE THE COAST IS CLEAR.
THIS WAY
KAY! HOW DID YOU --?
I DON'T KNOW HOW I KNOW.
...BUT THIS S THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

THAT GUY THEY K LLED WAS NO ROOK E. I NEVER FIGURED SOME KID WOULD FINISH HIM.
DID YOU?
YOU KNOW WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT, RIGHT?
DID YOU NOTICE?
WHAT?
THAT BIG, UGLY APE WAS TAKING SOMETHING.
YOU MEAN SOME KIND OF DRUG? I SAW HIM TAKE SOMETHING OFF THE TRAY.
YOU THINK IT WAS ALL A TRICK?
NO! I'M NOT SURE LET'S WATCH OURSELVES.
THE WHOLE WORLD'S GONE CRAZY.
IT DOESN'T PAY TO FORGET THAT.

?
!
I SEE TWO MEN. ONE OF THEM CARRIES A BOX WITH A MACHINE N IT ON HIS BACK.
THEY'RE COMING.
BE CAREFUL.
I SENSE THAT THEY ARE FAR MORE DANGEROUS THAN THE LAST ONE.
I CAN SENSE HATRED.
HURRY! THEY'RE RIGHT HERE!
WHAT THE F--?!
CH LL OUT! HE S TRYING TO RATTLE US!
I SEE THEM RUNNING DOWN AN ALLEY!

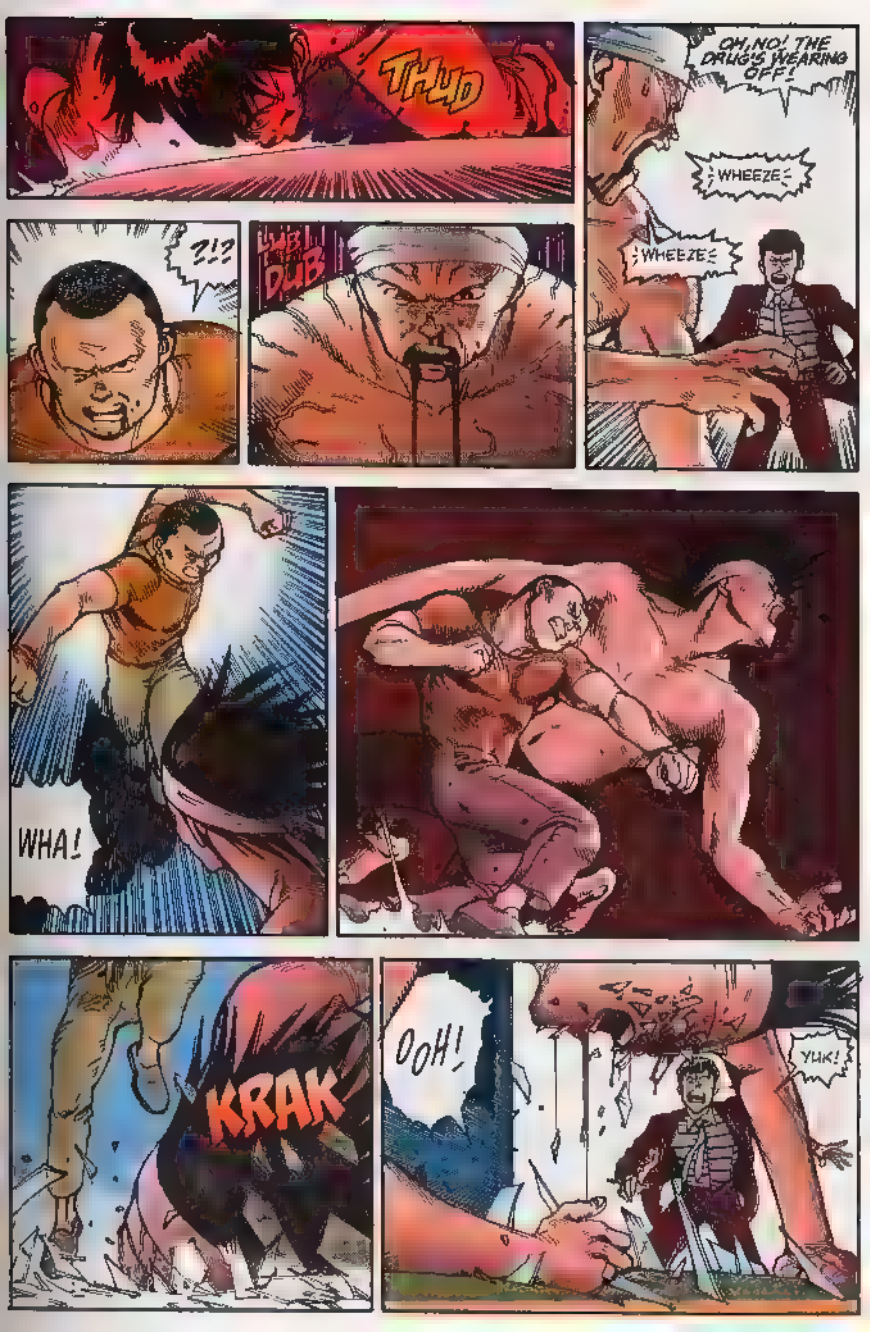
THEY ARE SHORTSIGHTED!
THE PATH THEY FOLLOW WILL TAKE THEM RIGHT INTO YOUR HANDS!
WHAT WAS THAT GUY?
BEATS ME!
AAH!
MMM?
FOR EVERY ROACH YOU KILL THERE ARE AT LEAST THIRTY MORE.
THAT'S WHAT MY MAMA ALWAYS TOLD ME.
WE'LL HAVE TO FIGHT OUR WAY OUT!
RIGHT!


KRASH
!
IT WOULD BE IDEAL IF YOU COULD TAKE THEM ALIVE FOR A PUBLIC EXECUTION. , BUT IF THEY GIVE YOU TROUBLE, DON'T TAKE CHANCES.
RUN!!
VVVV
SHK
ALL RIGHT, YOU BASTARD, COME ON!


OOOOOOHH!
KK
URK
AAYAAH!
BRSSH
BOP
!

OW!
THAT WAS PATHETIC! GET UP AND FINISH HIM.
HUNH?
SSHM
WHA--?!
HO!
SUK
TAK
SSHMM
HERE GOES!
HO!

WHOOSH
WHA--?
KRUK
GURK!
HO... HO...
...AH...
SHIT!


THUD
OH, NO! THE DRUG'S WEARING OFF!
WHEEZE
WHEEZE
?!?
DUB DUB
WHA!
KRAK
OOH!
YUK!

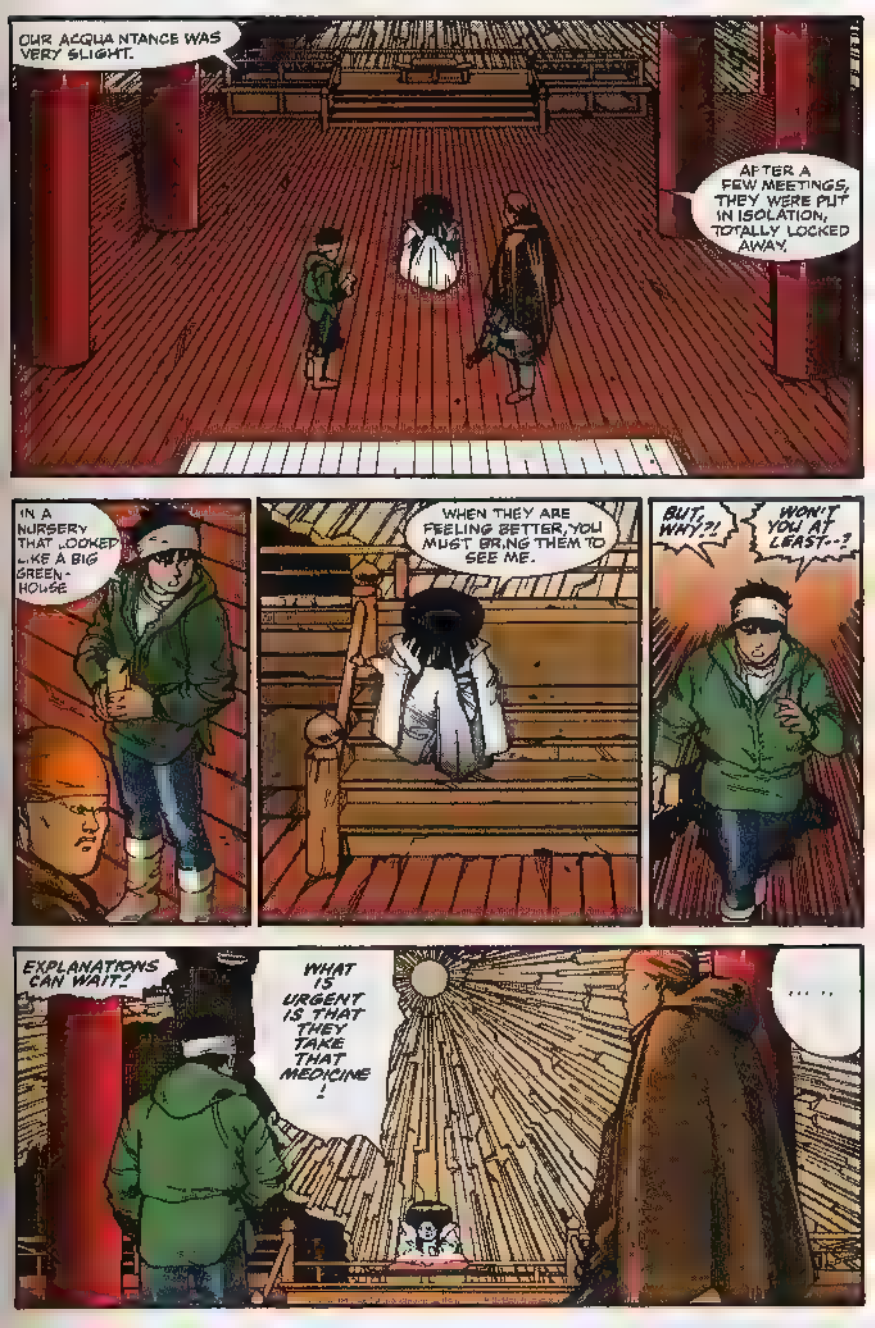
THOK
KRASH
GAAAH!
HA!--
--YAH!
KUKK
GLUSH
WHUD
HEY!
YOU SONUVA--

HUH?!
THE FOLLOWING ANNOUNCEMENT CONCERNS ALL CITIZENS OF THE GREAT EMPIRE!
!
ONE OF OUR BROTHERS HAS BEEN MURDERED! THE KILLER IS OUR ENEMY AND AN ENEMY OF THE GREAT LORD AKIRA!
HE'S A SPY FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD!
HE MUST BE CAPTURED!
HE MUST DIE!
DIE!
DIE!

THIS IS THE PLACE
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU
!
YOU'RE NUMBER 29, AREN'T YOU ?

I KNEW YOU'D COME.
BUT..
...JUST WHAT PROOF DO I HAVE THAT YOU'RE REALLY WHO YOU SAY YOU ARE?
THESE EYES OF MINE CAN NO LONGER SEE IT...
...BUT ON MY PALM YOU'LL FIND THE PROOF YOU SEEK.
GASP!!
19

THAT CAN'T BE REAL!
THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO HAVE THOSE MARKS ARE THE ONES FROM THE SECRET LAB COMPLEX!
THE SECRET LAB? I REMEMBER IT WELL.
YOU MEAN THAT'S WHERE YOU CAME FROM?!
OVER THIRTY YEARS AGO.
I IMAGINE IT'S CHANGED A GREAT DEAL IN THAT TIME
Shuf
THIRTY YEARS?!
TAKE THIS
"THEIR"?!
YOU KNOW NUMBER 25 AND 27?
IT'S A MEDICINE THAT WILL REDUCE THEIR PAIN


OUR ACQUAINTANCE WAS VERY SLIGHT.
AFTER A FEW MEETINGS, THEY WERE PUT IN ISOLATION, TOTALLY LOCKED AWAY.
IN A NURSERY THAT LOOKED LIKE A BIG GREEN-HOUSE
WHEN THEY ARE FEELING BETTER, YOU MUST BRING THEM TO SEE ME.
BUT, WHY?!
WON'T YOU AT LEAST--?
EXPLANATIONS CAN WAIT!
WHAT IS URGENT IS THAT THEY TAKE THAT MEDICINE!
... ..

KAY...
DON'T EVEN ASK!
I AM TOTALLY CONFUSED!
NEVERTHELESS...
NEVERTHELESS...?
LET'S MOVE OUR ASSES!
HURRY!
BEFORE THAT BOY UPSETS AKIRA AGAIN...
...I MUST CONSOLIDATE MY FORCES!

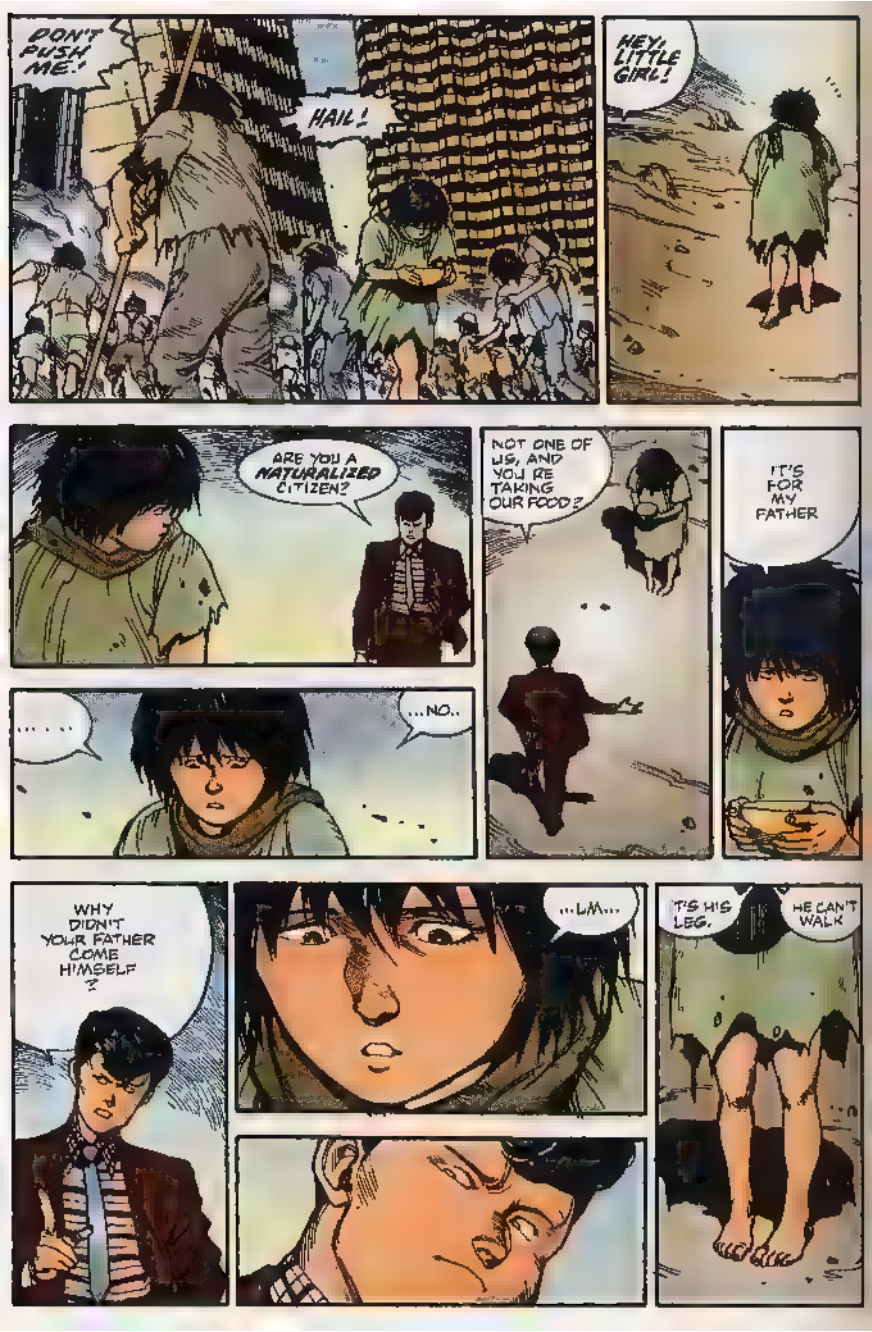
HUFF-
-HUFF-
HEY! OVER HERE!
!
WHO'S THERE?!
HOLD YOUR FIRE!
I WANT TO HELP
COME ON. TAKE A CHANCE. TRUST ME
WHO ARE YOU?

NOT PART OF THAT OUTFIT.
YOU NEED MONEY?
TOK
AND JUST WHAT KIND OF PRICE TAG DOES YOUR HELP CARRY?
HEY,, WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO HEAR THE TRUTH ABOUT THE GREAT LORD AKIRA?
DO WE WAIT HERE UNTIL IT'S DARK?
THAT'S NOT A BAD IDEA...
...BUT LET ME SHOW YOU A BETTER ONE
?
LOOK.
GONG
ONGONG
UNDER-GROUND?

AND NOW...
--ANOTHER STRANGER HAS BECOME HIS GUIDE!
THEY HAVE PASSED BEYOND THE RANGE OF MY VISION!
ANY OF THE SPY'S OTHER FRIENDS STILL WITH US?
I CAN'T BE CERTAIN...
...BUT THE SPY IS WARY OF HIS NEW COMPANION.
THEY DO NOT COME FROM THE SAME PLACE...
WHICH CAN ONLY MEAN...
SLISH
SLISH
"...THAT THERE EXISTS ONE GROUP BEYOND LORD AK'RA'S REACH!

YAY!
LORD AKIRA!
LORD AKIRA!
HAIL!
HOORAY!
大賞
AKIRA
LORD AKIRA! HAIL! HAIL!

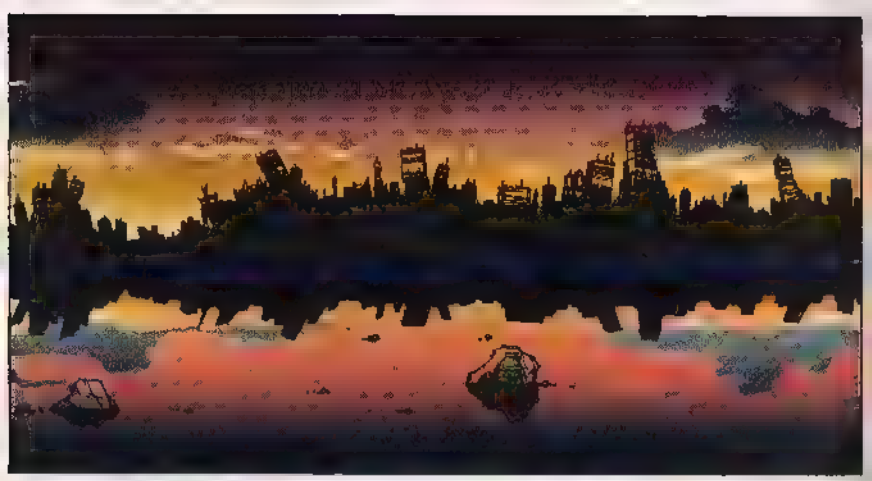
LORD AKIRA, IN HIS INFINITE MERCY, HAS DECREED THAT WE DISTRIBUTE FOOD TO YOU!
THANK YOU, LORD!
ALL HAIL TO LORD AKIRA!
HAIL!
FILTHY PIGS.
KRITS
IN THE NAME OF OUR GREAT LORD AK RA. .
YES! YES!
LINE UP!
EEE!


DON'T PUSH ME!
HAIL!
HEY, LITTLE GIRL!
ARE YOU A NATURALIZED CITIZEN?
NOT ONE OF US, AND YOU RE TAKING OUR FOOD?
IT'S FOR MY FATHER
... . . .
...NO..
WHY DIDN'T YOUR FATHER COME HIMSELF ?
...UM...
T'S HIS LEG.
HE CAN'T WALK

AH, BUT ONCE YOU'RE NATURALIZED, MASTER TETSUO WILL SEE TO IT YOUR FATHER'S LEG IS HEALED.
BUT...
NO!
A PRETTY LITTLE GIRL LIKE YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TO WAIT IN LINE FOR SLOP LIKE THAT.
I'LL TAKE YOUR FATHER SOMETHING NOURISHING.
BUT, I JUST
PLOP
YOU CAN SERVE OUR EMPIRE. YOU CAN SERVE MASTER TETSUO. DO YOU UNDERSTAND ME?

tak
!
tok
THERE'S SOMEONE THERE!

KLIK
KLAK
. . . . . .
GUESS MY IMAGINATION S PLAYING TRICKS ON ME.
MY NERVES ARE ALL WOUND UP.
I KNOW THE FEELING.



PLOK

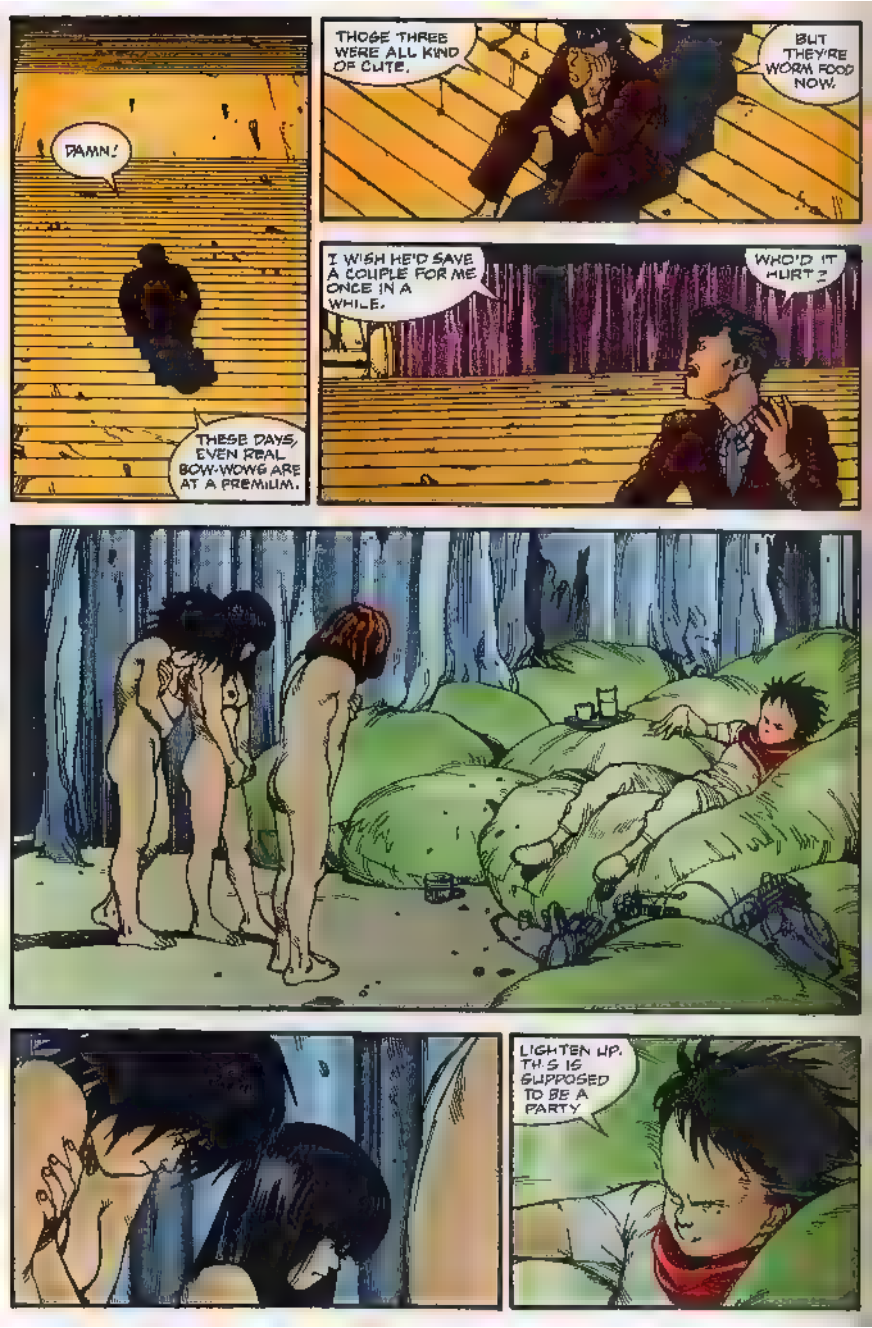
HMM?

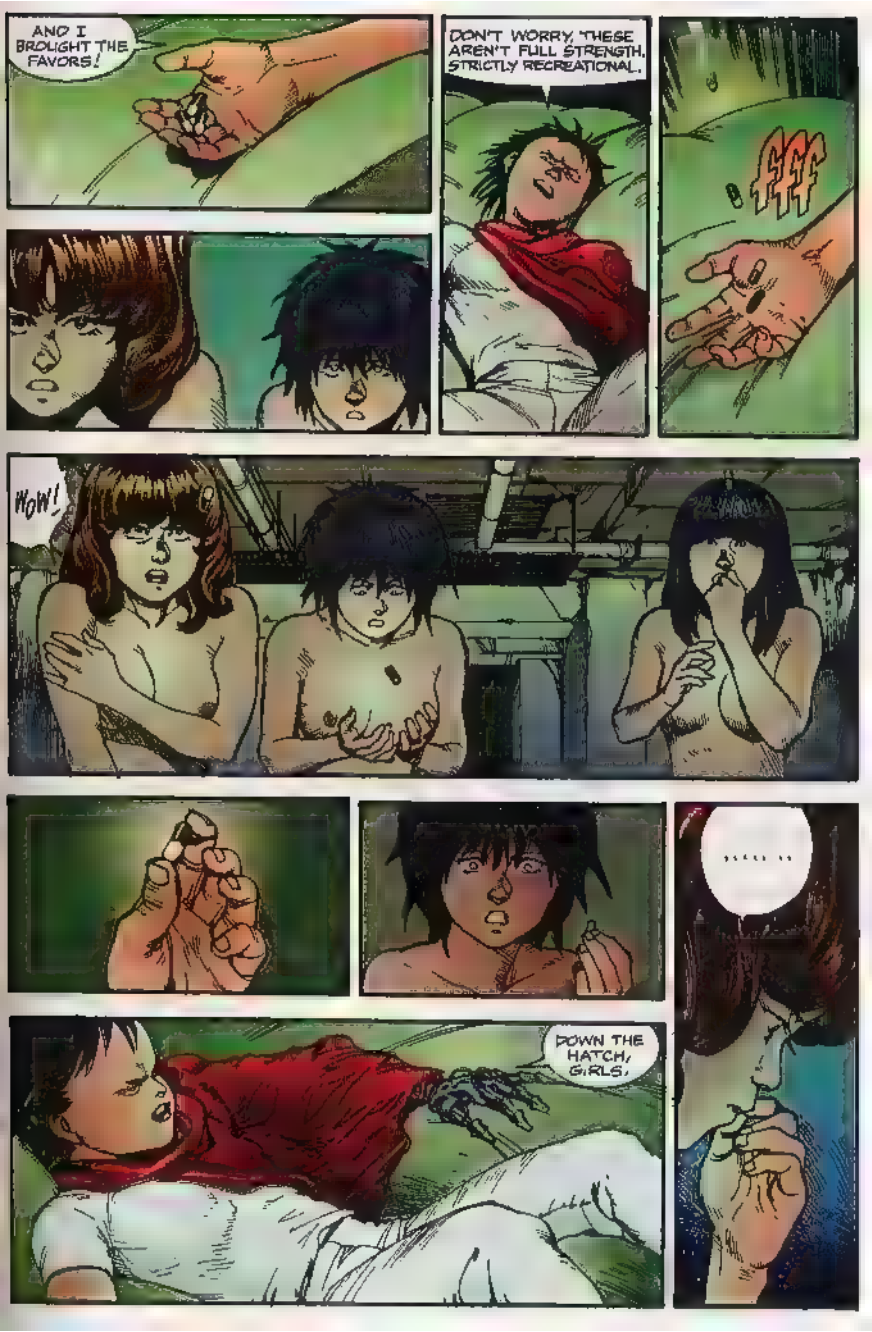
MASTER TETSUO!
WELCOME BACK

HOW'D IT GO? DID YOU GET THEM?
AHH THE TRUTH IS..

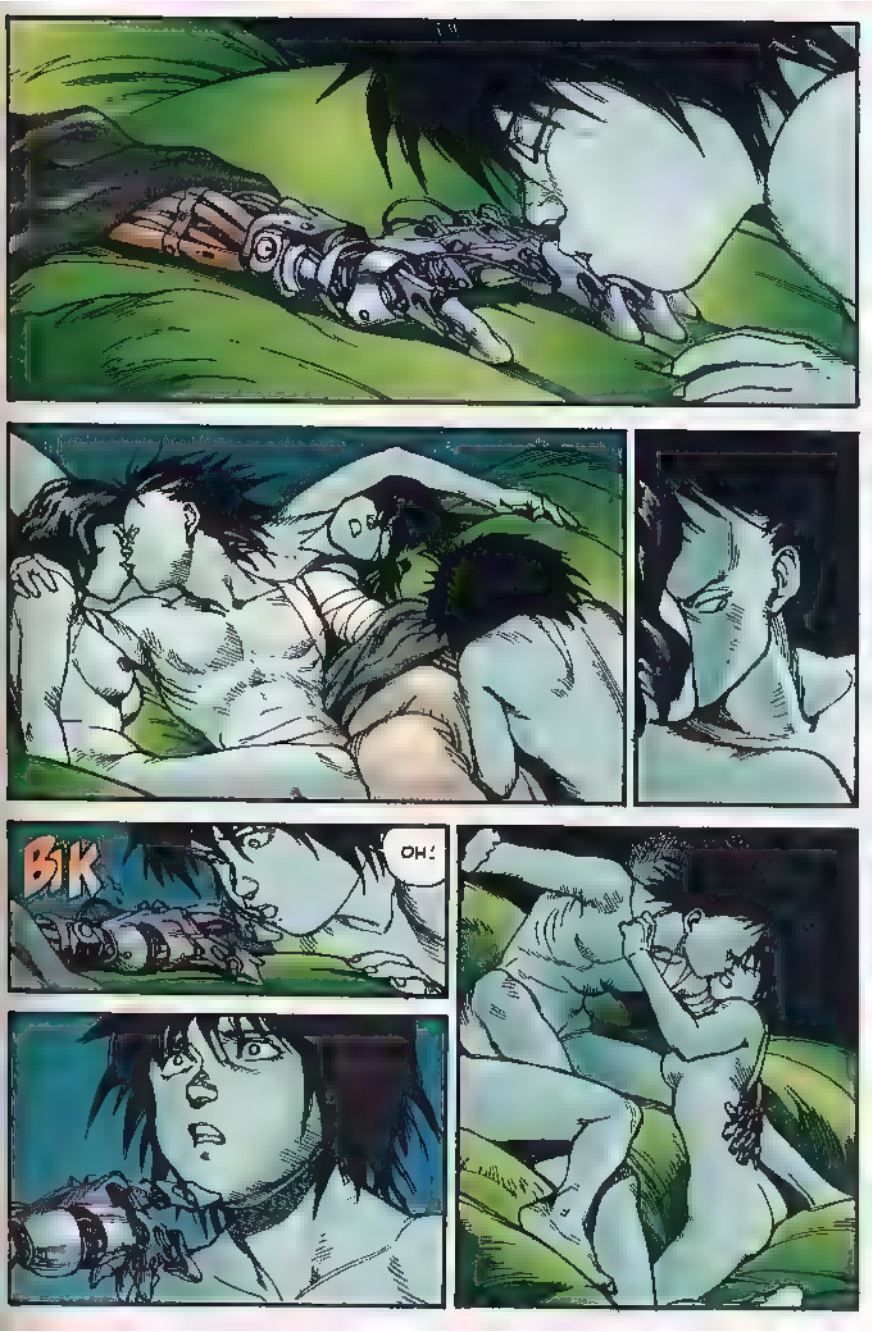
I KNOW YOUR INSTRUCTIONS WERE TO BRING BACK MORE THAN FIVE. BUT MOST OF THE GOOD ONES ARE ALREADY GONE

HOW MANY ARE THERE?
THREE OF THEM.
WHERE?
INSIDE, LORD.
MASTER TETSUO, PLEASE, BE GENTLE WITH THEM. SOME OF THEM ST... HAVE FAMILIES.
PLEASE.
...TRY NOT TO KILL THEM.
SLAM
OH!


DAMN!
THESE DAYS, EVEN REAL BOW-WOWS ARE AT A PREMIUM.
THOSE THREE WERE ALL KIND OF CUTE.
BUT THEY'RE WORM FOOD NOW.
I WISH HE'D SAVE A COUPLE FOR ME ONCE IN A WHILE.
WHO'D IT HURT?
LIGHTEN UP. THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE A PARTY


AND I BROUGHT THE FAVORS!
DON'T WORRY, THESE AREN'T FULL STRENGTH. STRICTLY RECREATIONAL.
WOW!
DOWN THE HATCH, GIRLS.

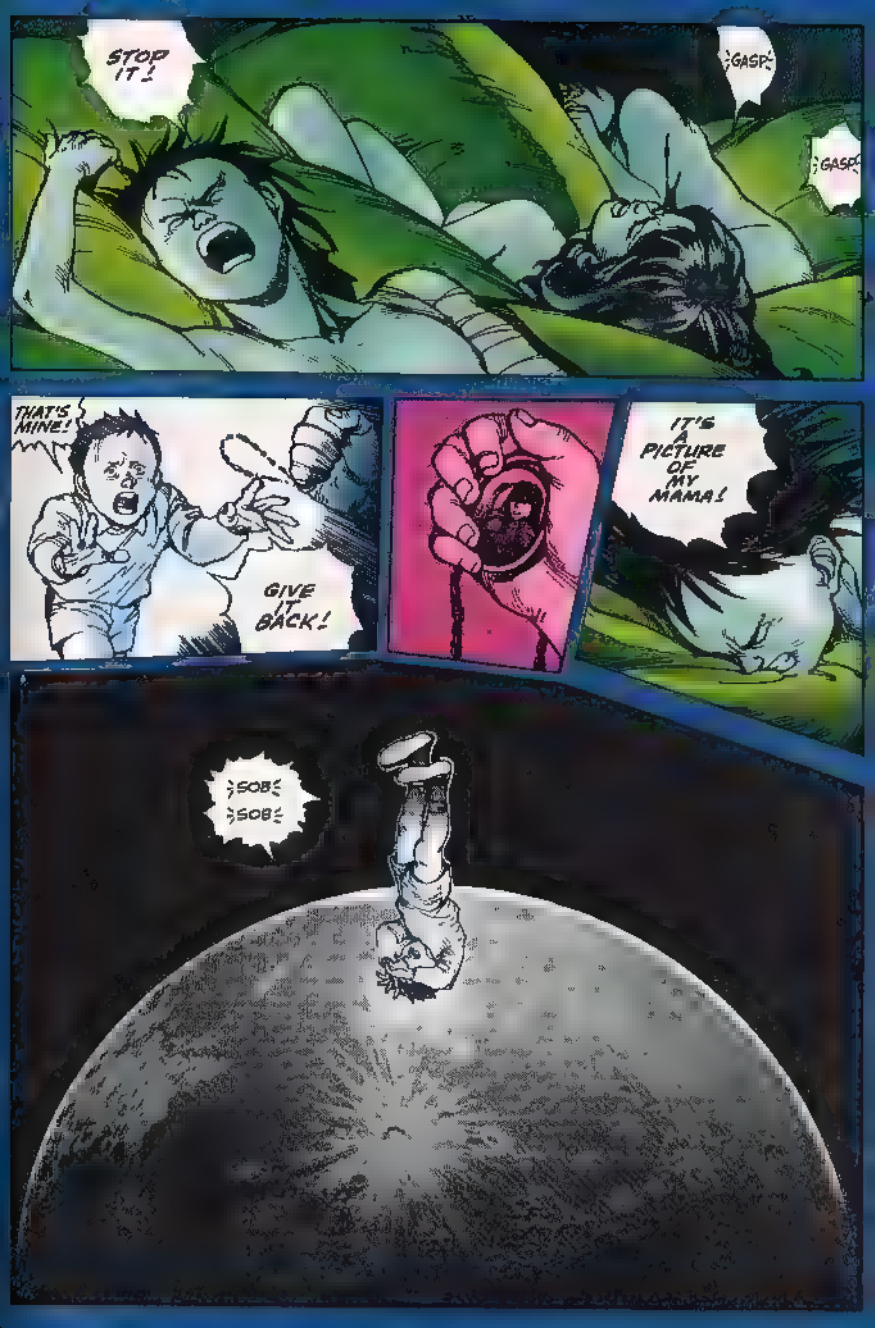
AHA.
THIS MUST BE THEIR HIDEOUT!


BIK
OH!

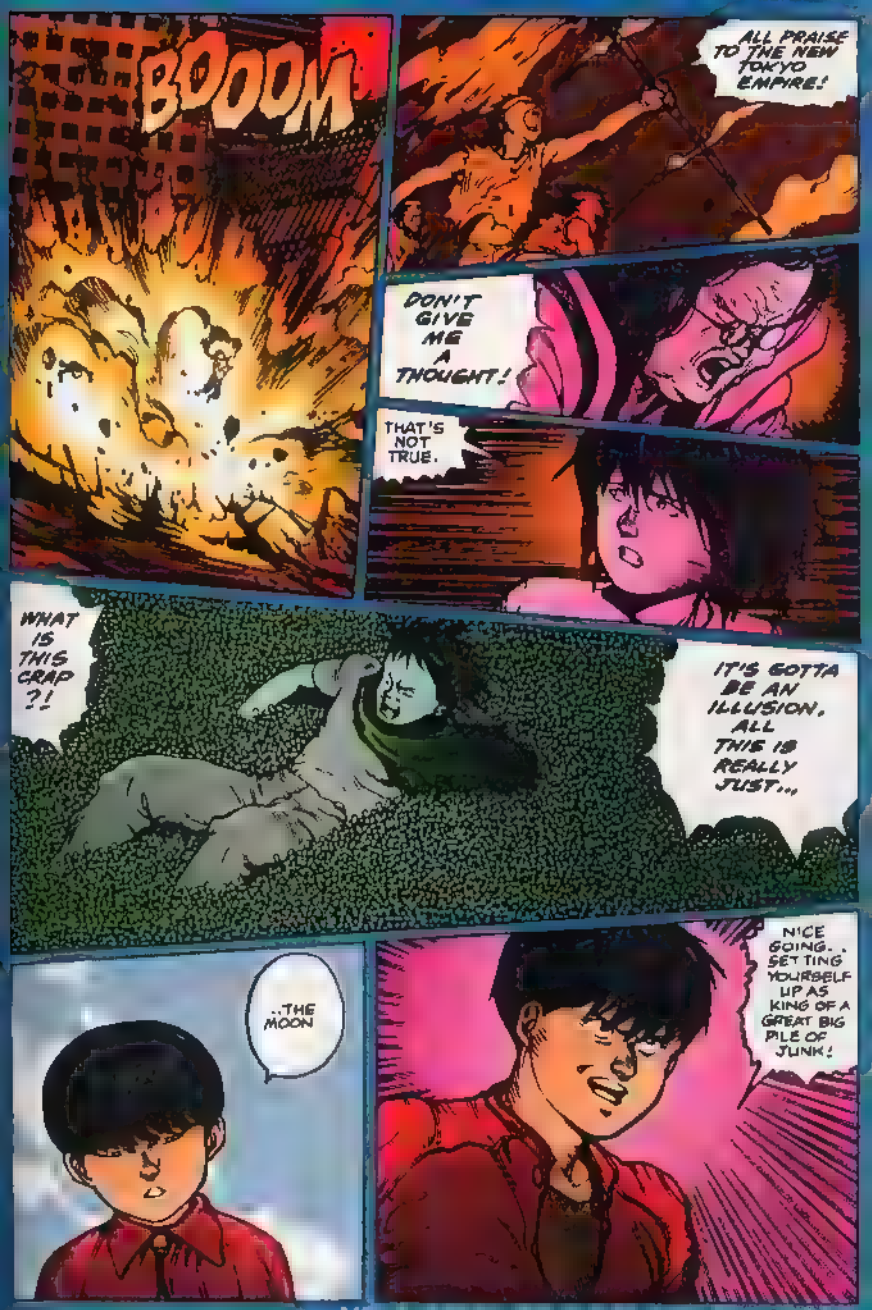
GASP
GASP
LUB DUB
LUB DUB
DRRRRRN

DORRRRN
SKREEE
!
KANEDA!
HEY, TETSUO, IF YOU CAN'T GET THAT HUNK OF JUNK TO GO ANY FASTER, KEEP IT OFF THE ROAD!
SHOWING ME UP! I SHOULD HAVE BEEN THE LEADER!

SOB
SOB
SOME KID IS CRYING
OH, YEAH.
IT'S ME!
WHY AM I CRYING?
AND WHO ELSE IS THERE?
WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME?
NO.
NO! I DON'T WANT TO GO!
WE WILL TEACH YOU MANY THINGS
MOST IMPORTANTLY, WE WILL TEACH YOU...
YOU'LL ALWAYS BE SCUM.
BACK OFF, YOU PINHEADS! LEAVE MY FRIEND ALONE!
KANEDA!
MY NAME'S YAMAGATA
DRRN


STOP IT!
GASP
GASP
THAT'S MINE!
GIVE IT BACK!
IT'S A PICTURE OF MY MAMA!
SOB
SOB

THAT'S NOT TRUE!
!
YOU PICKED IT UP IN THE STREET, DIDN'T YOU?!
WHO ARE YOU? HOW DID YOU KNOW THAT?!
WHAT?!
KAY! WHERE AM I?
KANEDA!
KANEDA!
NUMBER 41!
THIS IS THE MOMENT I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR!
WHAT IS THIS?!


BOOOM
ALL PRAISE TO THE NEW TOKYO EMPIRE!
DON'T GIVE ME A THOUGHT!
THAT'S NOT TRUE.
WHAT IS THIS CRAP?!
IT'S GOTTA BE AN ILLUSION. ALL THIS IS REALLY JUST...
..THE MOON
NICE GOING.. SETTING YOURSELF UP AS KING OF A GREAT BIG PILE OF JUNK!

AKIRA: the movie
AN UPDATE

Over the past two months, the English-language animated film **AKIRA**, as presented by **Streamline Pictures**, has opened in several cities around the U.S. **AKIRA** has received critical acclaim in many of these cities' leading newspapers. Following are excerpts from **AKIRA** reviews.

"Katsuhiro Otomo's **AKIRA** is the most expensive animated feature ever made in Japan (over 1 billion yen) and it's easily the most impressive as well. The two-hour film is adapted from Otomo's popular biweekly comic and, in the manner of contemporary Japanese comics, it is super-colorful, explicitly violent, intellectually provocative and emotionally engaging with its Perils-of-Pauline pace. Otomo has condensed the narrative sprawl of the comics to provide coherence, though there's a bit of **BACK TO THE FUTURE PART II** incompleteness to the story. That hardly matters, since the film moves with such kinetic energy that you'll be hanging on for dear life.

"Of course, **AKIRA** is not a long cartoon, but an ambitious animated feature that can be seen as a parable of scientific responsibility and cosmic rebirth, or just an action-packed serial. Or it can be seen as a visceral example of the future of animation."

—**THE WASHINGTON POST**

"An impressive example of today's Tokyo animation style, **AKIRA** is a long way from Saturday morning cartoons."

—**SAN FRANCISCO WEEKLY**

"If an animated film can be called mammoth, then Katsuhiro Otomo's **AKIRA** is. Of course, all animated films consist of painted panels, but the futuristic **AKIRA** is full of huge metropolitan vistas and massive destructive effects."

—**THE OREGONIAN**

"**AKIRA** is an astonishing piece of animation. Otomo has drawn his film with such amazing attention to scale, perspective, motion effects and panoramic viewpoints that some segments of it are dizzying.

"Others are so gritty, corrosive or violent, you almost feel assaulted.

"The frequently large-scale themes of **AKIRA** are fascinating, and have the tone of a disturbingly near future, just the other side of whatever nuclear holocaust seems to await us."

—**SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE**

" . the primary attraction is the artwork. the most expensive animated movie ever made in Japan, **AKIRA** offers exceptional detail, realistic lighting, and a palette ranging from DayGlo neon to dark-a ley shadow (327 colors were used in all)—it makes **BLADE RUNNER** look like a filmstrip. Full of sometimes bloody ultraviolence and rampant destruction, this U S. premiere is not for little kids, but it's indispensable to those with a serious interest in animated storytel ling."

—WASHINGTON CITY PAPER

"Gang warfare, student protest, terrorism, military oppression, nuclear holocaust—these aren't the usual topics one thinks of in connection with cartoons.

"But then **AKIRA** is no ord nary cartoon."

—THE SEATTLE TIMES

"Are animated films real y necessary? Why draw things that can just as easily be photographed? Generally, animators make objects perform stunts impossible anywhere but in their "magic" world. Yet sadly, most animated films are impoverished in imagination and theme Even in a short film forged from l ne drawings, pieces of paper, or piles of soft clay, the secret of success is the story And this is the secret of **AKIRA** "

—WILLAMETTE WEEK

"Readers of adult comic books should flock to Katsuhiro Otomo's revolutionary fable set in post-WWIII Neo-Tokyo.

"These post-punk punks are much like the pre-punk punks of **A CLOCKWORK ORANGE**, in a **BLADE RUNNER** setting designed by Otomo in smoothly animated, state-of-the-comic-art with bilingual visuals and an English soundtrack that's strangely devoid of music...

"Otomo provides a visual momentum that carries you forward, even when you don't know where you're going or why."

—SAN FRANCISCO BAY GUARDIAN

"**AKIRA** represents state-of-the-art Japanese animation, with a blazing variety of colors and detailed background that reflect a great deal of creative imagination. The film can be savored for its visual quality alone."

—SEATTLE P-I

The English-language version of the animated film **AKIRA** will play in the following cities during the month of March:

CINCINNATI, OH
MOVIES REPERTORY CINEMA
February 28—March 6

DENVER, CO
OGDEN THEATER
March 7—10

LOUISVILLE, KY
VOGUE THEATER
March 16—22

AUSTIN, TX
DOBIE THEATER
March 16—open ended

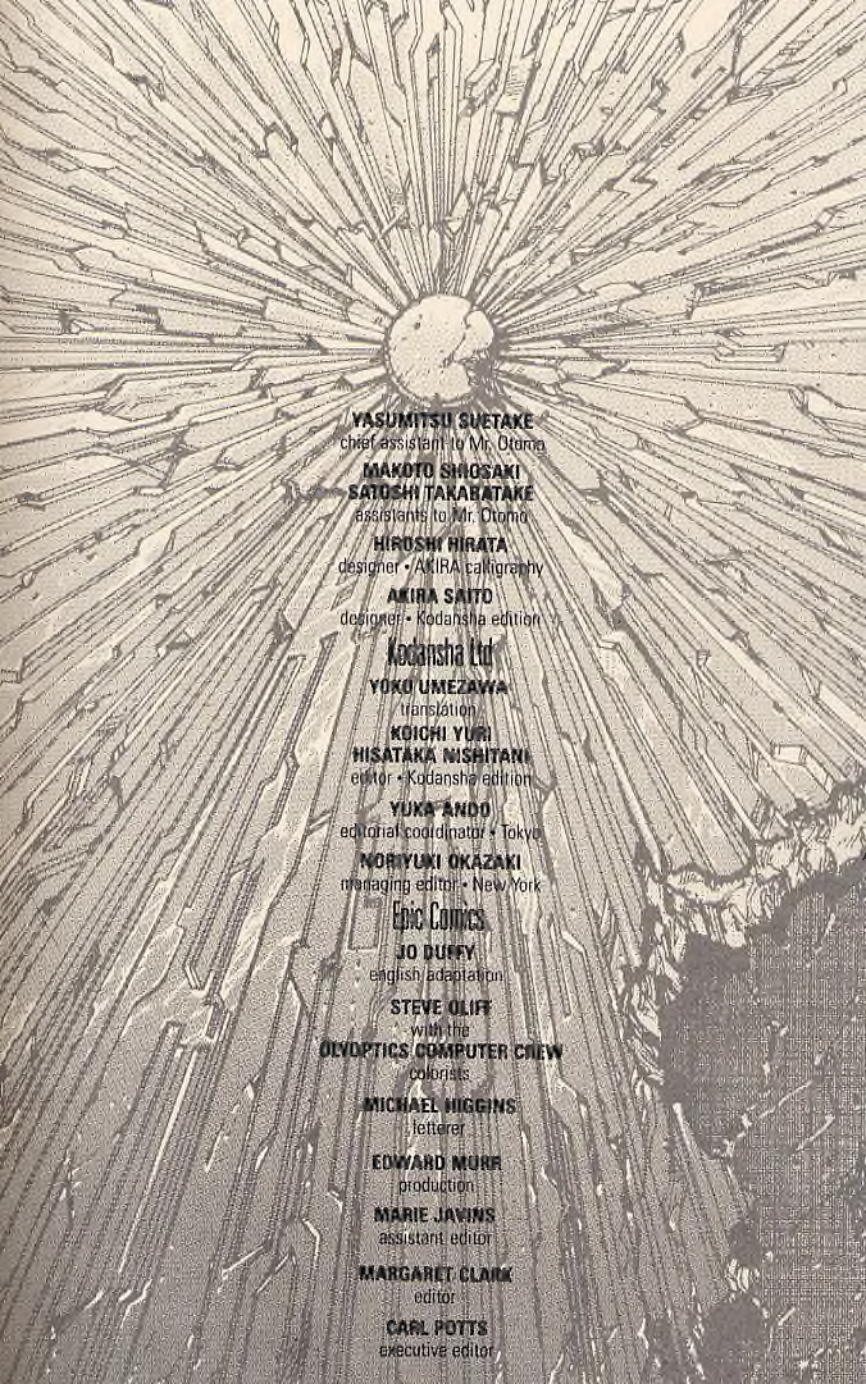
SALT LAKE CITY, UT
CINEMA IN YOUR FACE
March 23—April 1

CHICAGO, IL
MUSIC BOX THEATER
March 30—April 5

LOS ANGELES, CA
GOLDWIN PAVILION
Mid-March

Also, look for **AKIRA** in the following theaters during the upcoming months:

CHICAGO, IL: MUSIC BOX THEATER (April 6 for one week)
HONOLULU, HI: THE ACADEMY THEATER (April 20-21)
CLEVELAND, OH: THE CLEVELAND CINEMATECH (April 26-28)
NEW YORK, NY: THE NEW FILM FORUM (summer, 1990)



YASUMITSU SUETAKE
chief assistant to Mr. Otomo

MAKOTO SHIOSAKI
SATOSHI TAKABATAKE
assistants to Mr. Otomo

HIROSHI HIRATA
designer • AKIRA calligraphy

AKIRA SAITO
designer • Kodansha edition

Kodansha Ltd

YOKO UMEZAWA
translation

KOICHI YURI
HISATAKA NISHITANI
editor • Kodansha edition

YUKA ANDO
editorial coordinator • Tokyo

NORIYUKI OKAZAKI
managing editor • New York

Epic Comics

JO DUFFY
english adaptation

STEVE OLIFF
with the
OLYOPTICS COMPUTER CREW
colorists

MICHAEL HIGGINS
letterer

EDWARD MURR
production

MARIE JAVINS
assistant editor

MARGARET CLARK
editor

CARL POTTS
executive editor

The world outside is a world gone mad. Suddenly, horribly it is evident what the law of the jungle means---only the strongest, or the well armed, survive. In this insane landscape, Kay and Chiyoko struggle to survive and protect their charges---Kiyoko and Masaru. These two small para-normal children whose unusual abilities helped save the women's lives are now the victims of their own powers which have started to destroy them from within. However, Kiyoko does gasp out that Number 19 can help them. With grim determination, the women set out across the city. They know time is running out and they know they must find Number 19.

KATSUHIRO OTOMO'S

AKIRA

0 24885 23068 0 18

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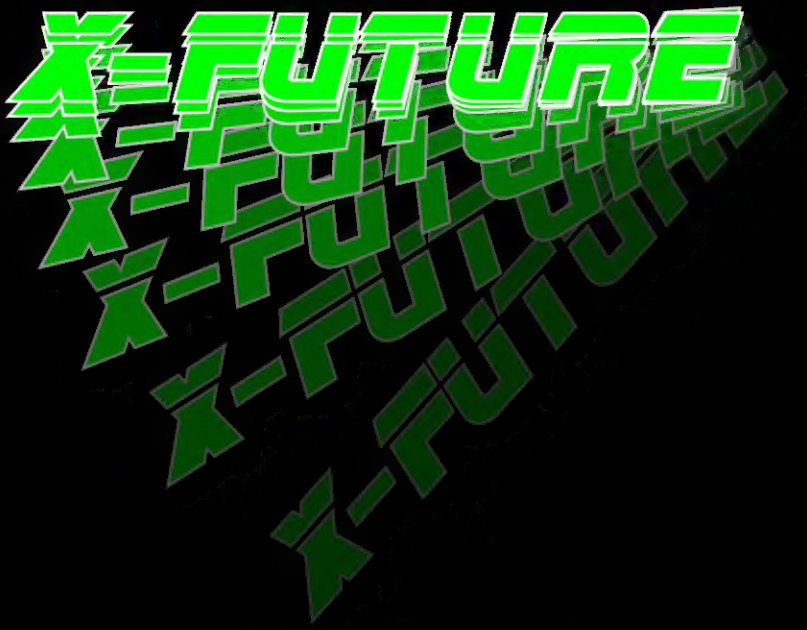

I love um

I buy um

I preserve um